1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

winnowed and stored. On one occasion however, I observed a woman deliberately putting poorly formed panicles into her seed basket. She said that she was doing this because she had pity on such small and imperfect *padi* plants ("*sayau ka leka mit*"), and wanted to give them another chance—a good example this of the highly personal feelings which the Iban have about their *padi*.

114. All Iban take the greatest interest in new or uncommon varieties of *padi*, and I encountered a number of cases of men having collected seed on their travels (*bejalai*). Majau, a man of Rumah Nyala, lost his *padi pun* when his *dampa* was destroyed by fire; on a subsequent journey to the Ulu Rejang he managed to procure seed from a Kayan family, and this, after appropriate rituals, became his new *padi pun*. Kubu, another man of Rumah Nyala, went in 1948 on a trading expedition to the Penihing people of the Upper Mahakam River. He returned to Sarawak with small quantities of three different kinds of *padi* seed, having purchased two of them, and purloined the third. In 1949 all of this seed was planted and the resulting crop stored away so that larger areas could be sown in 1950. The purloined variety, of which Kubu was more than proud, had exceptional characteristics: the length of the rachis was about 14 inches, with some 27 branches, carrying between 530 and 560 grains. This inter-change of *padi* seed, both sanctioned and unsanctioned, among the hill tribes of Borneo shows every sign of being a long-established custom.

115. After the harvest each variety of seed is stored in a separate container. These containers are made either from plaited cane, or from strips of bark sewn securely together; their most important feature is a lid that fits tightly enough to protect the seed from mice and rats. When filled—they vary in capacity from about two to ten gallons—they are stacked away in the loft (*sadau*), or around the walls of the *bilek* until the time for sowing returns. Although men take an active part in the rituals associated with sowing, it is rare to find a man with an accurate knowledge of all the varieties of seed owned by his *bilek* family. This is essentially the woman's province, and whenever I began to record the names, and other details of *padi* seed, the man of the family, hopelessly out of his depth, would hurriedly summon his wife, or some other woman of the family to enlighten me.

116. Iban families always store away considerably more seed than they are likely to require at the next sowing. My investigations showed that after the harvest a family of average size (i.e. 5-6 members) had seed holdings amounting to from 50 to 60 gallons, or approximately double their probable requirements at the next sowing. On May 20th, 1950, for example, the *bilek* family of Kubu, with six members, held the seed of 18 different strains of *padi*, the quantities varying from 1½ to 5 gallons, and totalling 57 gallons. Not much more than about half of the seed of each strain is sown, and the residue is stored away again lest any section of the farm fail or be destroyed. After the harvest however the old seed is consumed, and replaced by grain from the new crop.

Catch-Crops

117. A special feature of Iban agriculture is the cultivation of a wide range of catch-crops, interspersed on the same land as the *padi*. A few, such as *ensabi* (a kind of mustard plant, the leaves of which are eaten), are sown separately, immediately after the burn. Others are planted simultaneously with the *padi*, their seeds being mixed up in the same sowing basket as the *padi*, and sown into the same dibble-holes. The most important of these are:

(*a*) *buah rampo:* cucumber;

(*b*) *buah entikai:* pumpkin;
(*c*) *buah empusut:* luffa sp.;
(*d*) *buah labu:* gourd.

All of these are ready to eat before the *padi* has ripened, for the Iban delight in the fruits of these plants when they are still immature; and again, cucumber and pumpkin leaves are cooked as vegetables as soon as they have formed. In good years there is often a glut. Around the edges of the farm clearing, and in the immediate vicinity of the hut (*langkau*) which stands at its centre, various other plants are grown, such as: cassava (*empasa*), maize (*lingkau*), *changkok* (Sauropus albicans), and pineapples (*buah nanas*).

The Weeding of the Farm

118. One of the greatest difficulties with which a shifting cultivator has to cope is weed growth. Under certain circumstances it may even seriously interfere with affairs before the burn. This happens if the period between the felling and the firing is too protracted, in which event weed growth and general regeneration choke the fallen timber and prevent a good blaze. This re-growth which springs up before the burn is termed *pelangus*, and occasionally it becomes so thick that part of a farm has to be abandoned. I was able to observe a striking case of this at Rumah Nyala in 1949. Majau, a young and inexperienced farmer who had but recently set up his own *bilek* family, felled about 3 acres of secondary jungle (*damun*) early in May, hoping, he said, for an early burn. Because of bad weather however, he did not succeed in firing his farm until 14th September, by which time it was so densely covered with *pelangus* that about half of it did not catch at all, and of the remaining 1½ acres only those parts which he had slashed a second time burnt well. The outcome was an exceedingly poor crop, for there was healthy *padi* on not much more than a single acre.

119. Within a few weeks of the burn the weeds begin to reappear. Their prevalence and their nature depend very largely on the type of land which is being farmed. After the felling of primary jungle, for example, weed growth is slight, but after two consecutive firings of secondary jungle (i.e. a *kruko' damun* farm), weeds are usually prolific with *lalang* (Imperata sp.) and other virtually ineradicable grasses, ferns and shrubs having invaded the land. These factors will be discussed in the section on land usage.

120. Weeding begins, in a desultory way, even before sowing is completed. On a number of occasions at *belaboh padi pun* rituals, I observed the women whose farm it was devote their spare time to weeding, leaving the business of sowing to their guests from other *bilek* families. Within a day or two of the completion of sowing the rite of *bebasu arang* ('washing the charcoal') takes place. This represents the formal termination of the many prohibitions (*pemali*)[1] which are in force during the period of planting. Weeding is then ready to begin, but its commencement is not marked by any kind of ritual.

121. Of all the labour stages in the agricultural cycle weeding is the most onerous and irksome. It has none of the excitement of felling, and lacks the conviviality and the heightened emotion associated with the many rituals of sowing. Weeding is uninviting, unremitting work calling for diligence and

[1] For example, during the sowing period it is forbidden to pluck the eyebrows or eyelashes (*pemali mantun bulu mata*), as this is symbolical of the young *padi* shoots being plucked out by birds. Again, there must be no forging, etc. of iron (*pemali ngamboh*) for this causes the young padi to become 'feverish' (*angat*) and sickly. In all there are about a score of these *pemali*.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

stripped of its bark is suspended from two *rotan* loops. When struck with a hardwood mallet, this *tengkuang*, as it is called, gives a resounding note, and experts beat out a kind of menacing tatto. This is interspersed with loud whoops, shouts and cries, from the *tanju* of the *langkau*. Some families erect, at several points on the farm, large split-bamboo clappers which can be activated, from the *langkau*, by tugging on long *rotan* leads. These acoustical devices are used both by day and night. As a further defence—when the need arises—bonfires are lit along the edges of a farm.

132. Insect pests are an even more difficult problem. Against such things as the rice stem-borer and the rice bug, the Iban have no defence other than magical potions which they scatter over the growing *padi*. To cope with larger insects—locusts, crickets and grass-hoppers—magical contrivances are similarly used, but these are supplemented by active collecting—mostly on the part of women and children. The opportune time is in the early dawn, when the insects are to be found sleeping on the *padi* stalks. For the Iban there is the added incentive that certain types of locust are looked upon as a relish, and impaled upon reeds they are carried back to the farm-hut to be roasted over an open fire.

133. It is during the critical few weeks just before and after reaping begins, that these precautionary measures reach a climax. At nights the *dampa* in the valleys are inhabited only by the aged and decrepit, by the sick, by nursing mothers and young children, for all the able-bodied members of the family are away in the *langkau umai*. It is not an unpleasant duty, for the promise of the harvest is close at hand, and everyone is eager to guard grain grown with such toil and trouble. It is a time of tension and anticipation, and throughout the night the sonorous cadences of gongs, and the hue and cry of shrill female and harsh male voices can be heard echoing around the hill tops, which, here and there are lit by the flicker and glow of fires.

134. The need for all these safeguards is very real, for despite the many precautions taken few farms remain unscathed, and neglectful and lazy families sometimes suffer severe loss. At Rumah Nyala, pigs and monkeys were the most intractable of all the animal pests. Particularly audacious were the pig-tailed monkeys (Macacus nemestrinus); on several occasions I saw them approach to within about half a furlong of a *langkau* where gossiping Iban were plainly visible, there to cram succulent young heads of maize into their cheek pouches. At Rumah Nyala (as elsewhere in the Baleh), I did not however, ever encounter cases of what could be called really serious damage, although I was always on the look-out for them. The worst incident which I did see was about a square pole of *padi* trampled down and partly devoured by wild pigs. This would represent a loss of not more than two or three gallons of grain, but under the conditions of scarcity which characterize the subsistence economy of the Iban, even such small losses are keenly felt.

135. Here, a word of warning may not be out of place. For the Iban *padi* is a major interest, and at harvest time the hazards of farming are a favourite topic of conversation. Among themselves the Iban are greatly given to hyperbole, so that the complaint: "*Ambis padi aku laban babi*" ("All of my *padi* has been destroyed by pigs"), means that a patch a few square yards in area has been trodden down. The Iban love to expatiate on their tribulations—rather as do the English about the weather—and in public discussion each man strives to give as poor a picture as possible of his own *padi*, and to magnify the difficulties he is

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

experiencing. These conventional exaggerations stem partly from an idea which pervades much of Iban thought, the notion that to dwell on the good qualities of a thing (e.g. the *padi* crop, in this case), is to tempt providence and to cause it to turn out to be the very reverse; and partly from a desire to conceal the existence of a good crop from other *bilek* families, and so be in a better bargaining position after the harvest. Again, inefficient farmers exaggerate the depredations of animals to cover up their own failures, and enlarge upon the paucity of their crop in order to excite the sympathy of those with a surplus. The Iban themselves well understand these conventions, but a European, unacquainted with Iban ways, is apt to be grossly misled by their hyperbole. This is not to say, of course, that serious damage never occurs. Because of death, sickness or some other mishap, it sometimes happens that a family is unable to guard its farm during the critical days preceding the harvest, and then wild animals wreak havoc on the almost ripe *padi*, and may cause the loss of many bushels of grain. The guarding of a farm just before and at the time of harvest is certainly a most vital phase in the cultivation of hill *padi* in the Borneo jungle.

The Harvest

136. We have already noted that the first seed to be planted is that of quick-ripening rices, known as *padi muda*. Ten strains of *padi muda*, cultivated by ten different *bilek* families of Rumah Nyala, had maturation periods varying from about 143 to 155 days, with an average of about 150 days. These *padi muda* are always the first to be reaped, for they are ready a fortnight or more before the main crop, or *padi tuun*. If it happens that the previous season has been a bad one, many *bilek* families will have by this time exhausted their own stocks of *padi* and be living on rice purchased from other Iban or from Chinese traders; or, if rice be unavailable, upon that much disliked scarcity food: sago. Before dibbling begins an Iban family has a rough idea of how long its stocks of grain will last, and if it is judged that they are likely to be exhausted before the next harvest begins, it is usual to sow a larger area than usual of *padi muda*, and to begin eating it at the earliest possible juncture. It is customary indeed, for the harvest to begin before the *padi* is properly ripe. This premature reaping, for which there is a special term: *suma*, v.f. *nyuma*, is a widely prevalent practice, for although it is usually prompted by scarcity, *bilek* families still well provisioned from the previous year cannot resist the pleasure of tasting at least a little of the new season's *padi*.

137. As the long tended *padi* reaches maturity (Plate 12), the temper of the community changes, for this is the best time of the whole year: for everyone, there is sweet-smelling new rice in plenty, and an abundance of catch-crops from which appetising relishes can be made. Past privations are forgotten and everywhere there is a spirit of elation and eager anticipation. The commencement of *nyuma* (or premature reaping) is marked by a minor ritual known as *mata padi*. A clump of *padi muda* is selected, and cotton, which has been dyed red, threaded betwixt and between the stalks, which are then encircled with a brass bangle; in the centre of the clump an offering (*piring*) is placed, omen-sticks (*kayu burong*) are thrust into the ground beside it, a sacrificial rite performed and prayers uttered. The general purpose is to consecrate the undertaking and to ensure that the spirits of the *padi* are not frightened away. This done, the reaping begins, but the reaping basket is merely slung from the shoulder, or held under one arm in recognition that this is not the beginning of the harvest proper. On the first occasion only one basketful of panicles is taken, and an immediate return made

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

years, when a surplus of *padi* has been gained, it is exchanged for gongs, which are then available in years of shortage. Each season, some families succeed in producing a surplus, while others find themselves with a deficit; and so, year by year in an area like the Baleh, scores of different families exchange gongs for *padi*, or *padi* for gongs. Jars (*tajau*), though to a much lesser extent, are used in the same way. Again, money—obtained from the marketing of jungle produce—is often used to purchase *padi*; and of recent years, cash crops—particularly rubber —have become increasingly important.

248. It frequently happens, however that a family is not prepared to part with any of its gongs or other property. In these circumstances recourse is had to the traditional scarcity food of the Iban: sago. Most *bilek* families possess small plantations of sago palms, specially planted as a scarcity crop (Plate 5), for no Iban relishes *mulong* (as prepared sago is called), and it is only eaten under duress when *padi* cannot be easily procured. When planted sago is not available, the men set off to scour the jungle for the wild palms, from which the nomadic tribes of Borneo—such as the Punans—habitually obtain the sago which is the main item of their diet.

Rubber as a Cash Crop, and its Relation to Padi Cultivation

249. We have so far been discussing the traditional ways of coping with a *padi* shortage, but to-day, in many parts of the Baleh, the introduction of rubber as a cash crop has drastically changed the situation. As far as I have been able to determine, rubber was first introduced into the Kapit District in 1907 when a prison gang planted some 200 young trees.[1] By 1913, both rubber and cassava were being grown by Iban communities living in the vicinity of Kapit.[2] During the years of disaffection, from 1914-1919, it is probable that little or no rubber was planted in the Baleh region itself, but soon after the Iban were permitted to re-occupy the river, in 1922, planting was resumed. At Rumah Nyala in the Sungai Sut, the first trees to be planted date from about 1924. Some years after this a strange series of events occurred. The story spread, among the Iban, that rubber trees had a strongly deleterious effect on their *padi*; the spirit of the rubber trees (*antu kubal*), so it was said, was able to attack and drive away the *padi* spirits (*antu padi*). Many Iban came to believe this extraordinary tale (which had sprung from a dream), and so deeply that they were persuaded to cut down the rubber trees they had planted. To-day they bewail their stupidity, but because of it, many Iban families in the Baleh region are now without productive rubber plantations.[3]

250. At Rumah Nyala, in 1950, all but four of the twenty-five *bilek* families possessed small rubber plantations. Rubber is prepared for the market in small sheets (*kepin*), and it is convenient therefore, to discuss *bilek* family plantations in terms of the number of sheets which they are capable of yielding when being fully worked. Measurement of some 50 typical *kepin* showed an average weight per sheet of 1·7 katis. (1 kati equals 1 1/3rd lbs.). The family holdings of Rumah Nyala are summarized in Table 23.

---

[1] "Sarawak Gazette," 1908, p. 13.

[2] "Sarawak Gazette," 1913, p. 118.

[3] This story appears to have had a wide circulation in Sarawak, for it was also encountered by Dr. W. R. Geddes among the Land Dayaks of the First Division.

1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

indeed, there was a marked tendency in this direction. At Gansurai, a Dayak long-house on the banks of the Layar River, for example, 6 of the 19 *bilek* families did not grow any *padi* during the 1950-51 season, and were relying entirely on imported rice which they were able to purchase with money obtained from the sale of rubber. This was no great difficulty. One of the *bilek* families of Gansurai, employed 11 Malays on a share-cropping basis, and in April, 1951, with rubber at $1·15 per kati, the monthly income of this family was about $1,400.

254. At Rumah Nyala, the rubber boom also made itself felt, but not to the extent of any household appreciably reducing the size of its farm. In many cases however, less than normal attention was paid to farming so that more time would be available for tapping rubber. Unfortunately, I was not able to remain at Rumah Nyala to guage the possible effects of this tendency upon the yields obtained at the 1951 harvest. The reasons why the rubber boom had not, by early 1951, seriously affected *padi* farming in the Baleh region are numerous. First, many families did not possess sufficient rubber to furnish their minimum needs. Further, the Iban did not analyze the changed situation in purely economic terms; their reaction was to continue with the cultivation of *padi*, and to reap what profit they could from rubber in the time left to them. (Towards the end of 1950, for example, many young men elected to stay at home and tap rubber rather than go on a *bejalai*). For this, they had a number of sound arguments. One element of great importance is the fact that to Iban palates their own hill rice is immensely preferable to the polished rice which is all they can purchase from the local bazaars. Anyone who has eaten hand-pounded, hill rice will appreciate this point, for hill rice of good quality has a delicious nutty flavour, which makes ordinary white rice seem insipid and savourless.[1] Again, from past experience, the Iban knew how risky it is to rely on supplies of imported rice; and here, certainly, they were on firm ground. Finally, as we have seen, the protracted work which accompanies the cultivation of rice is principally the duty of women; in 1950, there was a marked tendency for the general management of the farm to be handed over to the women of a family, while the men lived at the long-house and devoted their time to tapping rubber. In February, 1951, when I left Rumah Nyala, it had already been decided that during the coming season all *bilek* families would farm secondary jungle in the environs of the main long-house, and that after the harvest had been reaped (i.e. in 1952) all this land would be planted with rubber. Similar extensions of rubber plantations were taking place throughout the entire Baleh region.

255. As this brief survey shows, rubber production has become an extremely important element in Iban economy. At present it is still subsidiary to *padi* cultivation, and acts as a valuable safeguard against rice shortages which are liable to occur in unfavourable years. As long as rubber retains this subsidiary position it has a most useful fuction to serve, but there is always a danger that it may tend to surplant *padi* farming as a main activity, and this—in view of the world rice shortage—is a contingency against which active measures must be taken.

[1]Cf. Mr. Duncan J. de Soyza's statement: ". . . . some hill paddy varieties have outstanding qualities. The cooked rice of the scented varieties has a very agreeable odour and is pleasing to the palate. In eating qualities it is superior to wet rice." (Ref. Tropical Agriculturist, Vol. 100, pp. 211-218). Mr. de Soyza also points out that "from a nutritive point of view hill paddy rice is superior to wet land rice, being richer in protein compounds." (Cf. the findings of Prof. O. Kellner).

796 527 sits on them; above him home-made blankets *(pua kumbu)* are suspended like an awning; a wooden trough is put before him and in it the whetstones are put; above the whetstones a pig is placed and the man takes a spear and pierces the heart of the pig and the blood is made to run into the wooden trough to besmear the whetstones. After the sacrifice is over the man commences to make an offering [262] of *pinang*, *sireh*, black *pulut* rice, and barley cooked in leaves, smoked fish, eggs, sweet cakes, and smoked *keli*. This offering is put into the wooden trough with the whetstones. The man then invokes *Pulang Gana Raja Sua*, *Ini Andan*, and *Manang Jaban*, beseeching them to look and behold and to turn their faces towards them; he requests them to listen to their petitions, protect them, and show favour to them.

After the invocation is over the wooden trough which contains the whetstones is moved into the centre of the covered verandah *(ruai)* where the *pandong* is to be erected. The *pandong* is erected for the purpose of hanging the ceremonial basket *(sintong)*, and in it a sacrifice is placed on a plate. In the *sintong* also is placed a species of lily called *sengkenyang*, a charm against bewitched persons, a kind of bamboo called *temiang* and porcupine quills. The basket hung is supposed to represent a *(bubu)* [789] fish trap set. It is hoped that *Pulang Gana* will place in it a charm for obtaining a good crop of paddy. This charm generally takes the shape of a piece of stone or a pig's tusk.

Everybody in the house has a *pandong* in his *ruai*. At dusk the men that are engaged for a consideration begin to intone the incantation invoking *Pulang Gana* to come to the feast. Every *pandong* in the house is gone round by the men who intone the incantation in the choicest words of their poetry.

796 527 772 The country of *Pulang Gana* is underground on the range called the *Giling Chiping*, (like the burning of coals of fire,) which is at the mouth of the frozen river the waters of which are like blood that has coagulated.

[p. 38]

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

seed, and weeding the plants after they have sprung up, and in collecting the harvest when the crop is ripe; this, as the padi seldom all ripens together, is a tedious and laborious occupation, as they have to cut off each ear, or head of the padi, separately. They generally return to their houses half an hour before the men, who arrive at dark, so that they may have their plain and simple food prepared for them; this seldom consists of any thing but rice and salt, except when their traps are successful in procuring them better fare. Though they have numbers of fowls, pigs, and goats, about their houses, they seldom kill them excepting on occasions of general festivity. When they can afford to purchase salt fish from the Malays, they much prefer it to animal food.

Nor after the harvest has been gathered, and the labours of the farm have for a time ceased, are the women allowed to be idle; they have constant employment in making cloth of the cotton, as already noticed; fine mats of rattans worked into pretty patterns; baskets for the next season, made of split and coloured rattans, which they carry on their backs, suspended by a band which crosses the forehead; clearing padi from the husk, so that it may be brought to market as rice, or preparing it for their own use; these, together with their household duties, attending to their children, and carrying wood and water for their families, fully occupy their time, and the cheerful alacrity with which these are all undertaken by them, is alike

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

are young are taken captive; these, after living with 567
their captors for some years, lose the remembrance of their families, or, perhaps, only recollect that they were destroyed, and consequently fall into the customs and practices of the people amongst whom they live, and from whose power they soon lose all hope of de- 567
liverance. In many instances children, who have 597
been taken from the land-Dyaks, become so endeared to their conquerors, that these latter adopt them as their own, and they are then admitted to all the privileges of the free-born of the tribe, and inter-marry with the sons and daughters of the other inhabitants of the village. Instances are not uncommon when children thus treated have forgotten their parents, and expressed, when the opportunity of returning to their tribe has presented itself to them, an unwillingness to avail themselves of it, thus causing to the parents who had so tenderly cherished the remembrance of them, infinite agony; but, when they have once arrived at their native village, and experienced all the kindness of parental affection, these impressions soon wear away, and they are always finally glad that they had been restored. In the 567
villages the slaves are not distinguishable from their masters and mistresses, as they live all together, and fare precisely the same, eating from the same dish, and of the same food; this, as has been before observed, 262
is principally of a vegetable nature, though no superstitious observance prevents them from partaking of

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

262 the flesh of animals, as amongst the inland tribes. Nearly all the beasts of the forest are eaten by these people, even monkeys, alligators (if small), snakes and other reptiles are esteemed. Like the French, they regard frogs as a delicate dish, and bestow considerable pains in procuring them: their rice is cooked in brass or earthen pots, called priuks, which they purchase from the Malays; and plates of English manufacture have recently become very general among them. They eat from the plates with their right hand, compressing the rice (which is not cooked dry as that of the Malays) into a ball of convenient size. They know no way of cooking flesh but by boiling it, which they do in bamboos, having previously cut the whole animal into small pieces.

I once saw some Dyaks roasting a monkey, but did not stay to observe whether they did not boil it afterwards, as they generally partially roast these animals to free them from the hair. They have very little idea of flavouring their food except with salt, though they sometimes employ chilis, or small capsicums, turmeric, and ginger for that purpose. The Sebooyohs, who have lived more intimately with the Malays than the other tribes, have very much improved upon their cooking, the methods having been copied from their Mahometan neighbours. As they have no occasion for fire except for the purposes of cooking, their houses have no chimney, and the little smoke which is created finds its way through

4: Roth E-4 (no date) 1891 OC6 Iban OC6

825 or a crocodile. The orang once helped the Balaus (tribe) on a critical occasion.

[777 787 776] Those who dream of the cobra are lucky. The spirits, too, often adopt the form of snakes.

The *tuah* is some fish, bird, or beast which makes the totem of some family or tribe, and which they may not kill or eat.

●262 Several Dyak tribes object to eating pork or venison or other animals; but it is because they are afraid of getting certain complaints or skin diseases, and the custom becomes hereditary, as many families are subject to these complaints, or it arises from the fear of going mad. Some married women tremble at touching deer's flesh previous to the birth of the first born, [787] or because they have been warned in dreams to abstain from particular kinds of food. Their religion does not forbid them to eat any particular kind of animals.

778 There is a pond at Aäp on the Rejang river which the natives do not care to approach, there being something uncanny about it. The Kinahs (tribe) have a great reverence for the rocks of the river on which they live, and if they affirm with a *Bato* (River) *Baloi* or *Bato Bulan*, or *Bato* whatever it may be, you may be sure they are stating the truth. Dian says the gift of [43] a tiger's tooth to a Kinah chief will make him your friend [572] for life, and he will never fail you or turn false to you for fear of being devoured by the beast.

774 If a Dyak dreams of falling into the water he supposes that 787 this accident has really befallen his spirit, and he sends for a *manang*, who fishes for it and recovers it. The *manangs* 755 profess that in addition to the true spirit given by God to man, there are other spirits, *i.e.*, the shadows which ordinarily attend every man wherever he goes.[1] These are the spirits that fall into the water. The *manang* gets a platter before him and fills it with water. After incantations, he fishes in this platter with hand nets. He pulls these out a few times with no result. At length the spirit comes up, is captured, and restored. No doubt Dyaks often concoct dreams out of their waking thoughts to suit their interest, yet they are implicit believers in the reality of dreams, and will not spare expense to atone by ceremony or sacrifice for a bad one.

586 Dyak women when they want to separate from their husbands 787 and have taken a liking for another man, allege that they have dreamt that if they do not separate they will die in pregnancy. This is generally accepted, as it is customary to put faith in dreams, and there seems to be no test whether the alleged dream be true or not.

787 Dyaks, before they dare occupy a new house, kill a pig and

[1] *See* p. 117.

4: Roth E-4 (no date) 1891 OC6 Iban OC6

512 515 few minutes in the sun before putting on their *chawats* (loin-cloths).

512 462 264 231 Their next duty is to prepare the morning meal. They eat with the men or not as they please, but they generally prefer to feed with the children after the men have finished. When breakfast is all over they clean up the crockery and brush the floor. The pigs and poultry are fed with the refuse, as are also the dogs.

512 462 244 262 They are now ready to accompany the men to the farm, or if not required they pursue their own occupations, which are various and manifold. As it is necessary to provide vegetables for the next meal, they visit their gardens for this purpose and bring home with them whatever they may be able to find in them, viz.:—cucumbers, pumpkins, melons, capsicums, &c. Tapioca leaves, cucumber leaves, and sweet-potato leaves are used by them as much as anything else, and they are fond of them when boiled in water.

512 462 251 313 264 Sometimes they go out fishing with scoop nets when they have the time to spare, or are desirous of a change of diet. It is the business of the men to provide pork, venison, and fresh fish, but the preserving is done by the women, who smoke or pickle according to fancy. There is never a want of firewood in a Dyak house; one of the first duties of a husband is to provide this, or he gets into bad odour with his wife or mother-in-law. The wood is smoked until every particle of moisture is evaporated out, and it becomes quite brittle and hard. If the women go out in the forenoon upon expeditions of the above kind, they have to be back again by the middle of the day to cook the mid-day meal. If they are busy on the farm, and mean to make a day of it with the family, they take what rice they require with them early in the morning and cook it on the spot to avoid the journey to and fro.

512 462 252 At two o'clock in the afternoon they pound a measure of paddy with heavy wooden pestles to free it from the husk; each woman is provided with a wooden mortar which is placed either in the *tempuan* or thoroughfare, or inside the *bilich* or room, and two women pound away at each. At 4 p.m. they bathe, and at 5 p.m. they are busy cooking for the third and last meal of the day. After the things are cleared away they hang up the mosquito curtains, and put the children to bed, while they sit up for an hour or two to converse with the men, and retire to rest when tired.

512 462 [854] In addition to the above routine of daily labour, they have a variety of things to do, and are never idle. They have to fetch drinking water and to nurse the babies, and when they are tired of carrying them about in their arms, they strap them on to their back with a cloth.

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6
Bahau OC5

I 304
B 304
133
177

universal or obligatory, and is only performed upon males. In the female the clitoris is said to be amputated.

The spritsail yard in the penis.—The *palang* is a smooth bar of bone or metal, the size and length of the bar of an ordinary watch-guard, with the ends rounded off. It is not generally so elaborate as the *utang* (perforation of penis) used by the Kyan chiefs, but it is equally effective and gratifying to the female. The *palang* is not, however, a Dyak institution; it originated with the Kyans, but it is fast becoming popular with at least a portion of the rising generation. It is nevertheless a pernicious practice, and ruinous to the male organ, even if the operation be skilfully performed; it is therefore to be hoped that the young fellows will discover their mistake before it is too late and refuse point blank to pander to the vitiated propensities of the looser behaved females. These latter encourage the practice for their own selfish purposes by every artifice in their power. The truth appears to be that no woman once habituated to its use will ever dream of permitting her bedfellow to discontinue the practice of wearing it. The Dyaks are satisfied with one, the Kyans, especially the chiefs, with sometimes as many as three at a time. The operation is a painful one for any man to submit to, and if the hole be not driven clear of the urethra the consequences are apt to be serious in the extreme. The member is first immersed in cold water and when numb to all sensation, the glans is compressed sideways between a pair of perforated bamboos, and a pointed brass peg is driven through it with a single blow, but in such a manner as to pass above the urinary canal. The *palang* is then introduced as the peg is slowly drawn out.

I 833

The *palang unus*, as it is called, is also used by the Dyaks. It is a ring, or collar, of plaited palm fibre, furnished with a pair of stiffish horns of the same wiry material. It is worn on the neck of the glans and fits tight to the skin so as not to slip off. The idea is in all probability borrowed from the Malays.

5. *Hunting.*

I 224
[262]

Hunting with dogs.—Hunting is with the Sea-Dyaks an occasional pursuit rather than a steady occupation or a necessity of existence. They subsist more upon a vegetable than an animal diet, and they fish far more than they hunt. They only form hunting parties once or twice a year, when the entire village is about to celebrate some periodical festival, and it becomes an imperative duty to provide an abundance as well as a variety of food for the guests. Other tribes devote more time to the chase

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6
Bahau OC5

and less to the soil. The hunter usually proceeds on foot, accompanied by his dogs, which run on ahead and beat up the game, while he dawdles about gathering things on the way that may be useful to him. He knows when his beaters are on the scent by their peculiar clamorous bark, and he hurries up to spear the animal they have brought to bay. A Dyak village swarms with dogs, but few of them are fit for the labours of the chase, being for the most part curs that whine and howl and are of no use whatever, except to consume the refuse food and prowl about the premises. They are small in size and of a tawny colour. The breed is known to the scientific world by the specific name of *canis rutilans*. Some are striped with black, others are plain; they are called *saih* or *sabit*, according as they are one or the other. The former are the fiercer looking of the two. The best of them, that is to say, those employed in the chase, are plucky little animals and will worry a boar three or four times their size and not give in until cruelly mauled. Such dogs are worth their weight in dollars to those who are fond of boar and venison, and invaluable to those tribes who, like the Batakans, depend upon the hunting path for their food.

The quarry is carried on the back in a pack-basket suspended from the shoulders, and is cut up at home. If it is too heavy or too bulky to be transported in this fashion it is either cut up on the spot or dragged by the leg along the ground to the nearest watercourse and conveyed home in a canoe. The Dyaks infinitely prefer pork to venison, the former being the richer, fatter, and juicier of the two; indeed the venison of the country is coarse and devoid of fat. There is no waste in the preparation of animal food. The horns and tusks come in for a variety of uses, ornamental, superstitious, and economical. The larger bones are preserved to be hereafter fashioned into knife handles. The smaller bones are chopped up with the meat and fat to be afterwards salted or smoked as choice may dictate. All pickled food, *makasam*, is esteemed, and especially so pickled pork; pickled venison and pickled fish are devoured with immense satisfaction.

The Kiñahs preserve the skulls and jaws of the animals killed by their dogs in the chase, and of such as they offer in sacrifice; but they abandon them when they abandon the village, for it is not permitted by custom to take them away from one place to another.

Spring bows.—As the woods are full of pig and deer, the Dyaks resort to various contrivances to secure these denizens of the forest. Spring bows are set and pitfalls are dug in likely places for them to run against and tumble into. The *peti*, as

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

much time on the war-path, and as the women keep the men up to the mark in this respect, and often will not marry a man who has not been successful in war, they are scarcely to be pitied if extra work fall to their lot during the time the men are away fighting.

The women are earlier risers than the men, and retire to bed earlier. They generally go to the river as soon as they wake, carrying their water-gourds with them. They have a bath, fill their gourds with water, and return to the house to cook the morning meal.

The principal article of food is rice, which is cooked in brass or iron pots. When the rice is ready, it is put out on plates. They eat with their rice either vegetables or fish. Sometimes they have the flesh of wild pig or venison, but that is not usual. A favourite method of cooking is to put the proper quantity of fish or vegetables or meat with sufficient water and a little salt into a newly-cut bamboo. The mouth is then stopped up with leaves, and the bamboo is placed over the fire, resting on a stone at an angle of 45 degrees or more. By the time the bamboo is thoroughly charred the contents are sufficiently cooked, and it is taken from the fire and emptied out into a plate. Sometimes rice is cooked in bamboos, and when it is ready to be eaten, the bamboo is split and torn off in strips, when the rice is found well cooked inside—a stiff mass moulded in the form of the bamboo.

When the food is ready and put out in plates, the men are asked to come into the room and eat. Sometimes the women eat with the men; but if there are too many to eat comfortably at one sitting, the men have their meal first, and the women eat with the children after the men have done.

The Dyaks all sit on the floor, which also serves as

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

264 their table. They have their rice on plates, or sometimes upon clean leaves. They eat with their fingers, dipping the hand when necessary into the common stock of salt, or common dish of meat or vegetables. They eat with their right hand, compressing the rice into portions of convenient size.

262 Nearly every animal is eaten by the Dyaks; fish, venison, and pork are eaten by all, but many tribes eat monkeys, snakes, and even crocodiles.

264 When breakfast is over, they clean the crockery and
356 put it away. The mats are swept and taken up, and the
231 refuse thrown through the open floor for the pigs and poultry under the house to eat.

622 Each long Dyak village house has its headman, who generally occupies a room in the middle of the house. He is called the *tuai rumah*—"the old man or chief of the house"—and he settles all disputes among the inmates, and decides the amount of the fine the guilty party has to pay. Great deference is paid to him, and as a general rule his people abide by his decisions. But his power is only one of persuasion, and depends upon his personal ability and sense of justice. He cannot in any way coerce his people into obedience. Upon the prestige and conduct of this *tuai rumah* depends the number of families a Dyak house contains. If he be a man of strong personal character, clear-headed, and upright in his dealings, many will settle under him. If he be otherwise, he will quickly lose the families living in his house. They will migrate to other houses where the headman is one they admire and respect.

166 There are certain laws among the Dyaks with regard to
621 a family leaving a house. If a new house is to be built, any families of the former inmates may refuse to make

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

into the rice for their daily food. In addition to all this, there is the worry and commotion connected with having to move the household for some months each year to the little hut put up in their paddy-farm some little distance away.

The Sea Dyak has year after year to grow as much paddy as possible. He rises on work-days early in the morning, partakes of his frugal meal of rice and salt, or rice and salt fish, varied, if he be very lucky, by a piece of wild pig's flesh or venison, which he has received as a gift or bought from some hunting friend. His wife bundles up for him his midday meal in the spathe of the Penang palm, and he goes off to his work, returning home late in the evening.

There are days when he does not go to work on his paddy-farm, but spends his time in getting firewood or mending things in his room, or in sitting about in the common veranda chatting with his friends.

When the paddy has grown a little, and the time for weeding draws near, the family remove to the little hut put up in the paddy-field. In the weeding the Sea Dyak is helped by his wife, the younger children being left in charge of the elder for the greater part of the day, while their parents are at work. When the weeding has been done, the family return to the long Dyak house for a month or so; then they go back to their hut to watch the ripening paddy and guard it against attacks of birds and beasts.

Paddy-planting is the chief occupation of every Sea Dyak, but he has plenty of time for other things, and his life is not quite so monotonous as may be supposed. The actual work of paddy-planting, and things connected with it, such as the building of farm-huts and the getting

Frogs are used for food and they are considered a great delicacy; quite life-like representations of them are not uncommon, such as the examples drawn on pl. XIII, *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*. The curious appendages on the fore-limbs of *d* cannot be accounted for.

(2) The other designs are of mythical creatures with more or less frog-like bodies and human heads, whose special significance is unknown to us. That on pl. XIII, *h* is labelled ***engkaramba engkatak***. ***Engkaramba gajai***, *i*, ***gajai***, *j*, and ***entilang gajai***, *k*, can scarcely be expected to look like frogs as they are mythical creatures. All these occur on ***pua***.

Salampandai is a female spirit and the maker of men. Apparently she is never visible in her own person, but she is supposed to have a manifestation in a creature something like a frog, which is also called Salampandai. This creature is regarded with reverence and must not be killed. If it goes up into an Iban house, they offer it sacrifice and let it go again, but it is very seldom seen. The noise it makes is said to be the sound of the spirit's hammer, as she works at her anvil in the unseen regions hammering out children as they are born into the world. The creature is supposed to be somewhere near the house whenever a child is born; it approaches from behind if the infant is a girl and in front if a boy (see p. 115). The *S.D.D.* says: "*Selampandai*, a species of locust only heard at night. It is the manifestation on earth of Selampandai".

Kalambi gajai is a jacket with a frog pattern (*S.D.D.*) and it appears to us that this ***gajai*** may be a representation of Salampandai as a frog. If this be so its occurrence on a cloth worn by women would be very appropriate, but we do not know if this is a woman's ***kalambi***.

Invertebrates

Spiders

Many species of spiders exist in Borneo, and some are large and have a poisonous bite; it is probably as a protection from such harm that they are portrayed on the cloths.

Spiders, ***emplawa***, usually are delineated correctly with eight legs, but exuberance in design and perhaps the speed at which they travel occasionally makes them appear as if they had more. They are sometimes represented with another animal inside them: (pl. XV, *a*), a lizard (pl. XV, *c*), a bird

X531 (pl. xv, *b*) and birds' heads (pl. xv, *d*). This is, of course, impossible, and may be due merely to the artist's urge to fill up a vacant space. Examples of young spiders are drawn on pl. xiv at *a* and *b* (these usually have but four legs), and of other spiders at *c*, *d* and *e* on the same plate.

Centipedes

This group of designs on pl. xvi, *a–f*, is very common on narrow border stripes of *bidang*, and its use is probably protective. The designs are very suggestive of the *embayar* itself, the so-called "hundred-legs" making a definite appeal. In one cloth, 35.881, the centipede (pl. xvi, *d*) extends for half of the length of the cloth and finishes with a curly twist at each end. The ardent desire for bi-symmetry which the Iban designer possesses often results in the head and tail of a creature being represented as much alike, but in the centipede there is actually this similarity.

Scorpions, insects, etc.

X531 136 There are other zoomorphs, some of which are not of very frequent occurrence in the cloths, such as those illustrated on pl. xvii. A scorpion, *kala*, is shown by *a*; and a scorpion's nippers, *spit kala*, by *b*. The *buyah*, a beetle or moth, is represented by *c*. *Pantak* is a wasp, the *S.D.D.* gives: "*Pantak*, a small dark-coloured wasp which inhabits holes in trees, or perhaps, more frequently holes in the banks of streams". *Pantak penandok* (pp. 74, 118; pl. [illegible], *d*) may be translated as the wound caused by the sting of a wasp, and *pantak penandok iku ruai* (p. 113; pl. xxvii, *e*) may be such a wound, or possibly the scarification preparatory to the cupping process (*nandok*), which may be likened to the ocelli on the feathers of the argus pheasant (p. 128); but *ruai* also means the verandah of a Dayak house. At one time we thought that the term on p. 113 might have reference to clay nests of solitary wasps sheltering under the verandah of a long house. Here we must leave it pending local information. A stylized wasp is shown in *f* on a flower pattern, *pantak lelambak*. A grub, *empetut*, *g*. Heads of locusts, *pala buntak*, *h*, *i*, are very commonly represented, perhaps for the purpose of protecting the crops. [262] Crabs are eaten; young crabs, *anak ketam*, are shown in *n*, *o*, *p* with only four legs, and at *q*, the nippers, *spit*, of the freshwater crab, *grania*.

X531 137 Many other jungle plants and one species of ratan have very large thorns which make the clearing of the jungle very difficult; two crossed thorny stems of ratan, *unak wi bekait*, are illustrated on pl. XXII, *e*.

The *tangkong* "creeper" (? a climbing plant), which is a jungle plant with scented pendant flowers, provides many characteristic patterns. The designs *b*, *c* on pl. XIX and all those on pl. XX are derived from this plant. The *randau* is some kind of creeper or climbing plant.

Illustrations of *bangkit* flowers are given in pls. XIX, *a*; XXI, *e*; the fruit is always represented as lozenge-shaped (pls. VI, *a*, *d*, *e*; XVIII, *i*, *j*, *k*) and is one of the most common motives on woven and embroidered cloths. The *S.D.D.* says, "*Bangkit*, a scented flower, scented leaves or fruit of certain jungle trees used as scent or ornaments to decorate the hair or body".

The fruit of the *beringen* tree is occasionally represented (pl. XVIII, *l*) and much more often that of various species of mango (*Mangifera*): we illustrate *buah bunut*, "horse-mango" (pl. XXII, *r*) and *buah angkong* (pl. XXII, *q*, *s*). "*Angkong*, a tree bearing strong-scented diamond-shaped fruit (the horse manggo)", *S.D.D.*

X531 136 A tree with its trunk and branches outlined by the light of fireflies dominates the surface of *pua* 35.922 (pl. XXI, *c*), and *pua* 35.928 is very similar. Species of large fireflies are common in Borneo, and when they settle in enormous numbers on a bush or tree it appears as if on fire; the white line round the designs suggests this remarkable phenomenon.

X531 137 ● 262 Very frequently repeated in all the kinds of cloths are the young shoots of the bamboo *pemuchok tubu*, which are used as a vegetable; we illustrate a few on pl. XVIII, *f*, *g*, *h*.

The curled tops of the *rĕsam* fern, *gelong paku rĕsam*, are occasionally depicted in a realistic manner (pl. XVIII, *m*, *n*, *o*). *Paku* is the general name for ferns, particularly for *Hollenium esculentum*, which is eaten as a vegetable. The *deman* is the fern *Gleichenia dichotoma*.

X531 137 824 Other useful plants are represented on cloths, the most frequent being the *bingka lia*, "root of the ginger" (*lia* or *liah*), and gourds. Seeds, *leka*, are shown on pl. XIX, *f* of the *labu*, "a white pumpkin, gourd, calabash (*Cucurbita lagenaria*)", *S.D.D.*, the dried fruit of which is used as a water vessel. The *serok genok* is shown on pl. XXII, *f*; the label says, "*genok*, a gourd with a long twisted stalk; the fruit is used by the Dayaks to rub their bodies in the place

17:Bedford D-5 (1958) 1959 OC6 Iban OC6
Rumah Bujak

TABLE I

146
262

AN EXAMPLE OF A POOR DIET CONSUMED BY AN AVERAGE ADULT MALE OF DOOR 1. (SEE TABLE IV).

Day	Breakfast		Lunch		Supper	
	Commodity	*Amount*	*Commodity*	*Amount*	*Commodity*	*Amount*
1.	Rice Salt fish	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Trongs ("egg fruit")	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Pumpkin leaves	8 oz. 2 oz.
2.	Rice Tapioca leaves	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salted Shrimps	8 oz. ½ oz.	Rice Tapioca leaves	8 oz. 2 oz.
3.	Rice Pumpkin	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Pumpkin	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Pumpkin	8 oz. 2 oz.
4.	Rice Daun Changkok (green leaf vegetable)	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Ikan Betok (fresh water fish)	8 oz. 4 oz.
5.	Rice Cucumber	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Cucumber	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Trongs	8 oz. 2 oz.
6.	Rice Ikan Pusu (variety of salt fish)	8 oz. 1 oz.	Rice Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz.
7.	Rice Prawn paste	8 oz. ½ oz.	Rice Pumpkin	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Pumpkin	8 oz. 2 oz.

17:Bedford D-5 (1958) 1959 OC6 Iban OC6
Rumah Bujak

TABLE II

AN EXAMPLE OF GOOD DIET CONSUMED BY AN AVERAGE ADULT MALE OF DOOR 5. (SEE TABLE IV).

146
262●

Day	Breakfast		Lunch		Supper	
	Commodity	*Amount*	*Commodity*	*Amount*	*Commodity*	*Amount*
1.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Fresh fish	2 oz.	Fresh fish	2 oz.	Cornbeef	2 oz.
	Paku kubok (wild vegetable)	2 oz.	Buah Retak (long beans)	2 oz.	Tapioca leaves	2 oz.
	Salt fish	2 oz.			Ikan Sepat (sea fish),	2 oz.
2.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Cornbeef	2 oz.	Yams	3 oz.	Sardines	½ oz.
	Daun Changkok (green leaf vegetable)	2 oz.	Salt fish	2 oz.	Pork	3 oz.
					Tapioca leaves	2 oz.
	Salt fish	2 oz.			Sting ray	2 oz.
3.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Mushrooms	2 oz.	Cucumber	2 oz.	Daun	
	Trong	2 oz.	Sardines	½ oz.	Bayam (green leaf vegetable)	2 oz.
	Ikan betok (fresh water fish)	2 oz.	Snails	1 oz.	Salt fish	2 oz.
	Prawn	3 oz.	Ikan puss	1 oz.	Sardines	½ oz.
					Pork	3 oz.
4.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Tapioca leaves	2 oz.	Cabbage	2 oz.	Cabbage	2 oz.
	Cornbeef	2 oz.	Fowl	5 oz.	Curried fish	2 oz.
	Salt fish	2 oz.			Sting ray	2 oz.
5.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Salt fish	2 oz.	Cucumber	2 oz.	Cabbage	2 oz.
	Trong	2 oz.	Sardines	½ oz.	Pork	3 oz.
					Prawns	3 oz.
6.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Trong	2 oz.	Trong	2 oz.	Pumpkin	2 oz.
	Pork	3 oz.	Pork	2 oz.	Sting ray	2 oz.
			Cabbage	2 oz.	Tapioca leaves	2 oz.
7.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.	Rice	8 oz.
	Buah gerok	2 oz.	Pork	3 oz.	Mushrooms	2 oz.
	Prawns	3 oz.	Cucumber	2 oz.	Daun Changkok	2 oz.
	Ikan betok	2 oz.	Sardines	½ oz.	Prawns	3 oz.

17:Bedford D-5 (1958) 1959 OC6 Iban OC6
Rumah Bujak

TABLE III

THE MOST MONOTONOUS DIET IN THE SERIES.

146
262

Day	Breakfast		Lunch		Supper	
	Commodity	*Amount*	*Commodity*	*Amount*	*Commodity*	*Amount*
1.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Fresh fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Fresh fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.
2.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Fresh fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.
3.	Rice Fresh fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.
4.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.
5.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.
6.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.
7.	Rice Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.	Rice Salt fish Daun Changkok	8 oz. 2 oz. 2 oz.

000 upon the demand for their use locally in securing lografts timber trade, as well as for export for the manufacture of furniture.

314 439 Another product of occasional but unpredictable importance to both indigenes and Chinese is the illipe nut, a seed of various species of Shorea (Iban, engkabang). Most of the crop comes from the Rajang basin. The seeds are a source of a very high quality polyunsaturate vegetable fat and are exported mainly to the United Kingdom where the fat is extracted and used principally in the manufacture of chocolate [262] and, to a lesser extent, in cosmetics. Ibans express the fat which is molded into margarine-like blocks and eaten as a delicacy with rice.

314 The illipe nut is a highly unpredictable crop, really heavy seeding occurring on an average of once in four years. Only a fortuitous combination of soft rains and gentle winds allows the fruit to set, and more often heavy downpours and gusting winds during the northeast monsoon destroy the flowers. In the peak years of 1959 and 1962, exports amounted to 22,000 and 20,000 tons, valued at M$20 million and M$16 million respectively.[10] When a heavy crop occurs, Ibans and other indigenes take to the forests to collect as many as their boats will hold.[11] Browne writes that

---

[10] Heavy crops also have been recorded in 1919, 1923, 1929, 1931, 1935, 1947, 1954 and 1970.

[11] And not infrequently more than they will hold. Overloading has cost several people their crops, boats, and motors every time of heavy crops.

processing and manufacture from Indonesia.

4. Rice

243
262
771

Rice is the basic food among the Ibans and other peoples of Sarawak, and, as will be discussed later, much ritual and religious belief is associated with every aspect of rice cultivation. From the inauguration of the annual activities with augury and ceremonial claiming of the fields to be farmed, until the concluding crooning to the rice-spirit as the grain is stored away, the acquisition of rice is an all-embracing way of life among the Ibans, touching on every aspect

192
261

of their lives. To eat(makai) means, in Iban, to eat rice. And no matter how filling and varied other foods are, an Iban has not eaten until he has partaken of rice.[39]

243
162

According to the 1960 census (Jones 1960: 260-1), 46 per cent of the total Sarawak population depended either entirely or primarily on rice cultivation for their living. As indicated in Table 7 on the following page, Ibans account for almost two-thirds of all rice farmers. And of the total economically active Iban population, almost 89 per cent are engaged entirely or primarily in rice cultivation.

---

[39] After eating a large dinner- but no rice - with our family, some Iban visitors left and went to the pasar to eat. When we accidentally encountered them at their second meal, we apologized for their going away hungary, "Oh no, they politely replied, your food was very good, but we hadn't eaten (rice) yet."

18:Sutlive E,M-5 (1957-1971) 1973 OC6 Iban OC6 Sibu

The basic premise upon which the elaborate rituals observed in connection with rice cultivation are founded is that rice, as well as all other objects, has a soul (semengat), or is enlivened through the soul of the ancestors.[5] For the Iban, life begins and ends with rice, and the strong orientation of many features of Iban life to its cultivation and attendant rituals warrant our describing Iban adaptation as a "padiculture." Rice farming is not merely an economic activity, but rather a way of life, with rice as alpha and omega.

To take nourishment means to eat rice, and the first food the infant tastes after his mother's milk (or, presently, Lactogen), is bubur ("rice gruel"). In adult life, there is no more certain standard for the good life than never to be short of rice (enda' kala' pungkang padi). Completing the cycle of existence, the soul of the dead Iban, having been ritually advised[6] that it is dead, crosses Batang Titi Rawan ("The Bridge Whose Crossing Makes Anxious") to Sebayan (lit., "The

---

[5] ". . .The whole of the ritual. . .is founded on the simple conception of the rice as animated by a soul like that which these people attribute to mankind. They expalin the phenomena of reproduction, growth, decay and death in the rice on the same principles on which they explain the corresponding phenomena in human beings. They imagine that in the fibres of the plant, as in the body of a man, there is a certain vital element, which is so far independent of the plant that it may for a time be completely separated from it without fatal effects, though if its absence be prolonged beyond certain limits the plant will wither and die. This vital yet separable element is what, for the want of a better word, we must call the soul of a plant. . .and on this theory or myth of the plant-soul is built the whole worship of cereals. . ." (Frazer 1922:413-4).

[6] In the ritual, "Separation of the Wilted Flower" (Serara' Bungai Layus), the manang ceremonially informs the soul that it is dead and must depart from the family.

Opposite").[7] After a stay in Sebayan, highlighted by eating, drinking and revelling with members of the opposite sex to the heart's content, the soul then proceeds on a journey through several river networks, the most important being Mandai Mati ("Death"), Mandai Awai ("Suffering"), and, finally to Mandai Jenoh ("Peace") where the soul is changed into padi-nourishing dew, the fitting end for the Iban life.

Further, not all rice is equally valuable. Each bilik possesses padi pun or a special strain of rice ritually defined as sacred rice.[8] The planting of the padi pun takes priority over the planting of any other strain, in planting wet rice as well as hill rice.[9] Although some degree of the reverence shown the padi pun as described by Freeman (1955: 154-155) still exists among the Ibans in the Sibu District, yet they are much more casual in their handling and treatment of it than the Sut Ibans.

Distinctions between Iban rice and other varieties are frequently pointed out, in favor of the former. Kami enda' kala' makai berau China ("We never ate Chinese rice"), boasted Embuas anak Imba, a notoriously successful farmer. On the inferior qualities of non-Iban rice, Indai

---

[7] Afterworld, where all is exactly reversed from this life.

[8] Any of the more than three dozen sub-species of rice can be claimed as padi pun, depending upon each family's lore.

[9] Among the more than 20,000 Ibans who have become Christians this ritual is accompanied with a planting of a wooden cross as well.

186 Anyau said, Mula ia aku makai berau China [illegible]i ka mutah ("The first time
243 I ate Chinese rice, I felt like vomiting"). The man who is lucky enough
262 [829] to grow enough rice so that he never is without and never has to buy is clearly considered a cut above the man who is not so successful.

243 That rice farming is not merely an economic activity but also
183 a ritual of powerful tradition is abundantly apparent in the cases of men and women who farm at a loss, not because they have to, but because it "is the way of our ancestors" (endang jalai aki ini kami bansa Iban). Umbing owns a wooden, Chinese carpenter-built house at the Tenth Mile Oya Road. In 1969-70, he returned to the area of his longhouse at Sungai Pa to grow rice, even though he is largely self-sufficient in terms of his needs. According to reckoning of the expenses he put out in travel, seed, labor and fertilizer, and the rice he harvested, he lost an estimated M$50 on the farming venture. Asked why he farmed at a loss, when otherwise he is an astute businessman, Umbing's answer was essentially that given above, and repeated by many Ibans: Endang jalai pengidup kami bansa Iban.

2. The Farming Year

243 The beginning of the farming year is set by the annual meeting
621 called by the tuai rumah of all the tuai bilik in his house, for the
[221] purpose of discussing where each family will farm during the next year. This permits the families involved to state where they will farm, and to

Malanus who manufacture sago flour (cf. Morris, 1964). Sago palms are held by Iban families under customary rights. The trunk of the palm is sawed into 30 inch lengths, split and rasped (diparut) for pig fodder. Sago also is eaten as a rice substitute when the rice supply is exhausted and Ibans have no money with which to buy more.[20] In the Middle Rejang and its tributaries, where the nipa palm does not grow, the leaves of the sago palm (daun mulong) are used for thatching and coverings. The sago nut (buah mulong) is a part of Iban pharmacology, being highly astringent and used in the treatment of diarrhea.

Numerous reeds grow both in low-lying and higher land, and are collected for the manufacture of mats and baskets by women. The reeds (ui, purun, bemban) are cut and taken to the longhouse where they are alternately dried and soaked until the outer covering (kulit) can be cut away (disimu', dilit) with a sharp, long-handled knife (lungga). The species bemban is the most valuable because it requires great attention in preparation for weaving. It is exposed to dew (diperambun) for five to seven nights in order to achieve the prized lightness of color. If rain falls the bemban is quickly retrieved by the women for rain will blacken the bemban. The weaving of baskets and mats is done by women on the longhouse ruai or covered common verandah. In addition to the

---

[20] A period that is described colorfully but dreadfully as maya bulan gantong sendok, "when the rice-ladle hangs (empty over the pot)."

In addition to the continuous demand of the Ibans themselves for mats and baskets, the former for covering the floors when sitting, for containing the newly harvested rice and for threshing, the latter for containers for seed, harvested rice, fish and jungle produce, among other uses, they also are manufactured for sale in Sibu.[21]

Other jungle produce of commercial value includes a wide variety of vegetables. Ibans living in the Sungai Sunga and Sungai Assan area collect edible ferns each evening and bring the ferns (the most common are paku' and kemiding) bound in pineapple leaves (daun nanas) to market in the early morning. Kangkong, a leafy vegetable not unlike spinach, is plucked and sold regularly. Less regularly, Ibans bring in bamboo shoots (tubu') and the cabbages of several species of palms such as the sago (upa' mulong), upa' pantu', upa' maram, upa' apong, upa' lalis and upa' bindang.

Fishing

Exploitation of aquatic life provides the principal source of protein in the Iban diet. Fish, shrimps and snails are caught or trapped in the numerous streams. Various types of worms and slugs are obtained

---

[21] The sale of mats and baskets affords an opportunity for Iban women to visit the Sibu pasar or, occasionally, to travel as far as Sarikei, where they rationalize the prices are better - and the cost of travel thrice that to Sibu! The availability of plastics is being exploited by Iban women who weave brightly colored baskets of plastic and sell them from door to door or to local shops.

226 by splitting open submerged logs from which they are removed. The presence of several species of fish depends upon conditions of the water, but other species are almost constantly present.

226 825 227 The most common fish are the ikan semah, tapah, empuran, keli', kaung, puyu, tilan, lajong, labang, and enseluai. During high tides and flooding, Ibans stretch nets (pukat, v.f., mukat) across streams or suspend nets over a framework at a slope of 20° (nyelambau). In smaller streams fish-traps (bubu) are planted and fishing is done with pole and hook (nginti'). In larger waters, the cast-net (jala, v.f., nyala) is used. When streams are low, snails are collected from the banks, and when the water is high on the main rivers and at the mouths of their tributaries, shrimp are netted.

226 The near absence of fish in some hilly regions and some smaller streams has prompted Ibans to dig fishponds, varying in size from 1300 cubic feet to 22 acres. The ponds are stocked with fingerlings or fry purchased from Chinese traders or supplied by the Agriculture Department. [434] The harvest of a large pond earns a profit of several hundred dollars for the owner, who also has his own supply of fish.

C. Animal Husbandry

231 In this final section dealing with the Ibans' adaptation, we shall consider briefly the types and purposes of animals and fowl which they [262] keep. As a general rule, the livestock which is considered edible by them is kept either for ceremonial purposes or for marketing, and little of it is consumed in the daily fare of the Iban.

342 secured, either with key-locks or with wooden bars. It is not uncommon for windows or low doors to be cut into the walls between bilik, to allow traffic or communications, the sharing of food or gossip, between close friends or relatives who live next to one another. But when quarrels arise, these openings are closed off.

The sizes of bilik within a longhouse vary according to the number of members in different families, and the relative wealth. At Rumah Nyala, Aup, the largest bilik is 24 feet wide and 56 feet deep. The smallest bilik resulted from the division of a bilik 20 feet wide into two sections because a husband and wife divorced, yet neither could afford to put up a new bilik. A wall was built, partitioning the bilik into two.

The family cooks, eats, sleeps and stores its property in the bilik. [372] Cooking is done on the family hearth (dapor) made of clay or stone and on which iron bars are suspended. Wood is used for fuel, and fed slowly into [262] a fire below the pots placed on the bars. The staple food is boiled rice and supplemented with ferns, greens, salt-fish or fruits as condiments (lauk, engkayu'). 512 Women do the cooking, often rising at 4 a.m. to prepare 264 the morning meal and, during the farming season, enough rice to be taken by [462] workers to the farm for a noonday meal. The lunch (bekal) is commonly taken in a plastic bag by residents nearer to Sibu, but still wrapped in a betel spathe (upih pinang) where such bags are not common. Workers return about dusk, bringing with them any food-stuffs that they have gathered, and the family shares an evening meal at about 7 p.m.

167 small returns on rubber and other cash crops; and the problem of maintaining security in such a vast jungle as the Third Division;[5] and finally because of the perceived rewards in the pasar, we may expect that even more Ibans will move into Sibu and other pasars because of the multiplex of factors which exert push-and-pull influences upon them.

243 133 511 Although Rumah Nyala is representative of many of the longhouses in the Sibu District with increasing rice yields because of participation in Government schemes and through improved techniques of horticulture, yet it and the other houses that are largely self-sufficient in rice are in stark contrast to a majority of the other houses in the Third Division.[6] For example, in the hillier regions[7] of the Song and Kapit Districts, the family that is able to produce enough rice to last from one harvest to the next is exceptional. Because of poor burns and the 1971 floods, some longhouse communities exhausted their meager rice supplies six to eight [262] months before the harvest. In such cases, the families have been dependent upon Welfare packages, rice which they have been able to purchase from the sale of rubber and other products, or have been reduced to eating sago.

---

[5] The Third Division has been made a special security area (Sarawak Tribune, 26 March, 1972) and the possibility of regrouping of longhouses (Sarawak Tribune, 27 March, 1972) has been mentioned.

[6] It is to be recalled that even in our sample in the Sibu District where production is among the best in Sarawak, only 36 per cent of the Ibans produce enough rice for an entire year.

[7] Much of the upriver area is so hilly that terracing is impossible, and flat land for planting wet rice is minimal.